

Iraqi NP take on role of quick reaction force

By Special Police
Transition Team

BAGHDAD-Airport Road here was once one of the most violent and dangerous roads in the country. Roadside bombs, small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade attacks were an everyday occurrence. Visiting dignitaries, news reporters and the Soldiers tasked with providing security were well aware of these dangers along this five-mile stretch, known to the coalition forces as Route Irish.

Things began to change in late 2004 and early 2005. A new focus was given to clear the road of debris, reduce the number of "blind spots," and control access to the highway. Slowly, the number of attacks on Route Irish fell until it became one of the safest and most secure, and most heavily traveled main highways in Baghdad.

It was during this time that the 1st Mechanized Brigade, Iraqi National Police took the



(Photo by Capt. Jared Levant, 3rd Special Police Transition Team)

Policemen from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Iraqi National Police Brigade conduct weapons training on the M2 .50 caliber heavy machinegun with U.S. troops.

lead in providing security along Airport Road.

The 1st Mechanized Brigade is the heavy-hitting reaction force for the Iraqi National Police. Based in Baghdad, its two battalions use a combination of fast Chevrolet

pickup trucks and heavily-armored, six-wheeled vehicles used by Army military police units, to man checkpoints and run patrols along Route Irish. But their responsibility does not stop there; the 1st Mechanized Brigade was

designed to quickly deploy throughout the region to augment security operations wherever they are needed.

Colonel Emad, commander of 3rd Battalion, 1st

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3-4 Cavalry teaches Iraqi security forces advanced first aid

By Sgt. Paula Taylor
4-1 Cav. Public Affairs

COP NIMUR, Iraq-Troops from 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, spent four days training Iraqi security forces in first aid, and provided them with some advanced medical techniques at Combat Outpost Nimur, beginning Dec. 26.

The class consisted of 28 Iraqi Army

soldiers, four Sinjar area Iraqi police and five Iraqi border policemen.

One of the instructors of the course was Sgt. Richard Kyle, combat medic, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 3-4 Cavalry. "We were teaching them the Combat Lifesaver course," he explained. "This was an initial introduction to first aid for them. Most of them have never experienced any of this, so they were pretty excited to learn."

Kyle said they organized the course so

that basic instruction would be given in the morning and that they would break into smaller groups for hands-on, practical exercises in the afternoons.

"After each block of instruction, I had my group pair up, then they were given scenarios and tasks they had to practice on each other. I walked them through exercises, like splinting a fracture, and let them try it on each other. When they did it correctly,

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Troops pass on life saving training to Iraqis in CLS course

CLS

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they would switch roles and do it again. If they didn't do it correctly, I would make sure they understood what they did wrong, then they would get to do it again."

For the airway manage-

ment class, Kyle said, they first taught the group how to check for a pulse. "Some of the students had never known how to check for a pulse," said Kyle. "They were all anxious to learn."

Once they learned about checking for a pulse and were taught the head-tilt, chin-lift method of opening an airway to

restore breathing, Kyle said the students were shown how to insert a J-tube. "American Soldiers normally don't want to practice with the J-tube because it is inserted into the throat to keep the airway open which causes a gag reflex," said Kyle. "Some of the Iraqi students wanted to try it. It's not dangerous, just uncomfortable, so we let them practice on each other."

Kyle said teaching this course was something the B Troop commander, Capt. Samuel Benson, wanted to do for the ISF. "He wanted to set something up," said Kyle. "It was a collaborative effort with the [military training team] to put this together."

The 3-4 Cavalry medics will next be in the process of training the ISF medics to teach this course. Kyle said his unit plans to teach this course again around Jan. 22 with the Iraqis in the lead. "We will help them teach the course, but mostly it will be them. The goal is for

them to one day be able to teach CLS on their own."

Another Coalition Forces Soldier, who assisted in the class, said he knows the training the ISF received was invaluable.

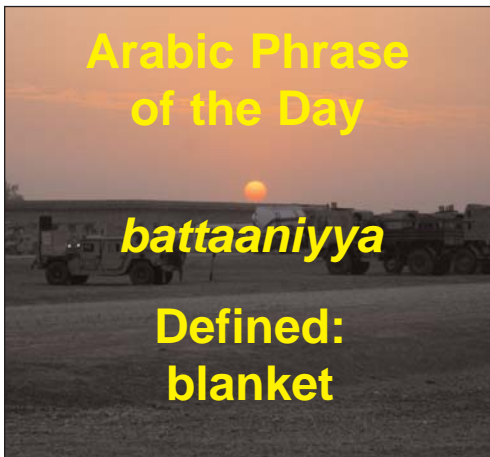
"The Iraqi Forces were eager and willing to learn," said Spc. Lucas Oppelt, combat medic and South Bend, Indiana, native. "With the integration of combat life-saving skills into their training, they will be confident in each other's abilities to save lives on the front line."

Kyle agreed with Oppelt and said he enjoyed spending time with the Iraqis. "I had a really good time teaching them. They asked a lot of questions, were attentive and excited to be learning something new. With these new life-saving skills that the Iraqi Army soldiers are starting to acquire, they will be better suited to help save their fellow soldiers in combat. I'm glad to have been a part of that."



(Photo courtesy of 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment)

A Headquarters and Headquarters Troop combat medic, Sgt. Richard Kyle, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, helps Iraqi Army soldiers properly insert J-Tubes during Combat Life-saver training at COP Nimur.



Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 50
Low: 44



Tomorrow

High: 55
Low: 40



Sunday

High: 53
Low: 39

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Iraqis take over security of Route Irish

Police

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Mechanized Brigade, recognizes the need for a different mindset when confronting the security issues of contemporary Iraq.

"We are all Iraqis fighting for the Iraqi government," he said through an interpreter, emphasizing the need to look past sectarian divisions when it comes to performing his role in the National Police.

Helping the unit work through these concerns is an American transition team, a ten-man coalition unit that is assigned to work directly with the battalion. Designed to mentor and assist Iraqi units as they take control of the fight, these teams reflect the full spectrum of modern military specialties:

Maj. Daniel Erker and Capt. Kelly Skrdland focus on military police procedures, and Maj. Bernard Brady and Sgt. 1st Class David Johnson teach standard infantry operations and techniques. Staff Sgts. Will Aho and Tracy Goodloe



(Photos by Capt. Jared Levant, 3rd Special Police Transition Team)

The 1st Mechanized Brigade, Iraqi National Police, stand in formation during an inspection of troops and equipment by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior.

train the battalion on vehicle and weapon maintenance, construction of strong points and daily operations. Capt. Guy Malatino works on logistics, Sgt. 1st Class Billy Teague on communications, Sgt. Raymond Borrego on medicine and first aid, and Capt. Jared Levant on military intelligence.

"Colonel Emad and his battalion, 3-1 Mech, have made incredible improvements over the past nine months, in both efficiency and effectiveness, in the accomplishment of their

assigned tasks," said Erker, the transition team chief working with 3rd Battalion. "This is a direct result of their desire to serve Iraq and its people."

The job is rarely as straightforward as patrolling the neighborhood. Because of its heavily-armored vehicles and non-traditional police role, the battalion must rely on traditional relationships and positive community feedback to spread word of its good reputation.

Changes in mission can occur quickly and without notice.

"One day we're patrolling a neighborhood and the next we're told to hand over responsibility to a different Iraqi unit," said Aho, responsible for weapons training and maintenance. "The following week our unit might have to focus on a different part of the city to help with stability operations. We know it's all part of the game, but it makes it difficult to focus on certain types of training."

Progress is slow, but visi-

ble.

"Traditional measures of unit progress and readiness are difficult to use here," Levant said. "The 'soft' factors are so much more important than most people realize. If the Soldiers and policemen feel that their units can take care of them, they will fight. If they have a sense of direction and purpose, they will fight. If they take pride in their work, they will fight."

Levant said very little can be taken for granted when it comes to daily operations. Even the shortest trips can be fraught with hazards, including roadside bombs, gunfire, and other dangers, reinforcing the need for a police force well integrated and responsive to community concerns.

"We're here to help the police get on their feet, to give them the tools they need to fight," said Johnson, the transition team's top noncommissioned officer. "That's our role as advisors, but they are the ones who will ultimately bring peace to Iraq."



A crew from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Mechanized Brigade, Iraqi National Police provide security for a checkpoint.

Camaraderie important to pair of Young troops

By Pfc. Jeffrey Ledesma
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - Despite the many dangers that lurk behind abrupt corners, wait idly underneath the fine sands and come falling from the gray sky, two forward observers with Headquarters Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, know why they have their boots on the ground in Iraq: the Soldiers right beside them.

Although it has been said

numerous times before by Soldiers throughout history, Pvt. Michael Ferreira agreed that when the rubber meets the road, he doesn't fight for politicians. He fights for his battle buddies in the dirt right next to him. The native of Springfield, N.J., said that although it's somewhat cliché, it's true.

His battle buddy sees things the same way.

"There's a certain honor that comes with combat; doing everything you possibly can to protect the guy next to you," said Pvt. Brad Thornburg, a 20-

year-old from Denver.

The relative safety of working at the division's headquarters building sometimes leaves these two young Soldiers wanting something more.

When Thornburg enlisted in August 2005 he wanted to be a combat Soldier. About a month later, Ferreira raised his right hand and swore in straight out of high school.

They both signed up to become fire support specialists despite their recruiters throwing other options onto the table. Before they found themselves in cavalry country, they were at Fort Sill, Okla., where the boom of artillery rounds is commonplace.

Ferreira admitted that, being in a combat arms specialty, he has a certain inner desire to be a part of the fight. The pair now finds themselves working side-by-side in the headquarters of Multi-National Division-Baghdad on the west side of the Iraqi capital, the center of a war zone.

Ferreira said that as someone who wears the Army uniform he worries about the troops that are out of the wire facing the possibility of death

each day. Thornburg confessed that although he thinks that it's terrible that so many Soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice in this war, he would jump at the first opportunity to go outside the wire.

Ferreira, 19, added that if he could do something that would help his fellow Soldiers get back to base safe and alive that's what he'd like to be doing.

"It doesn't matter if it's an earth-moving mission to deliver world peace or to just transport air conditioners to another (forward operating base)," said the youngest Soldier of the division's fire support cell. "I just want to be out there."

"I'd probably take a bullet for this guy," Ferreira said about Thornburg, a battle buddy since airborne school. "[For] most of the guys in my section there wouldn't even be a thought of whether or not I'd put myself in harms way in order to save their lives."

Thornburg said that there is something that pulls combat arms Soldiers toward the heat of battle. The camaraderie is evident.


"It's the reason we signed up for this," Ferreira said.




(Photo by Pfc. Jeffrey Ledesma, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)


Pvt. Brad Thornburg and Pvt. Michael Ferreira enlisted in the Army last year as fire support specialists. They've been together since airborne school. Both are now serve in Baghdad in the Multi-National Division - Baghdad headquarters at Camp Liberty, Iraq.





**OPERATION IRAQI
FREEDOM**





Stop before you act, don't rush into a situation or mission without considering the risks against the benefits.

Think about what you are about to do, what is the right way to safely accomplish the task.

Observe the situation and surrounding environment. What are the Risks? How can I reduce them?

Plan. Develop your plan to reduce the risks and decide how to best implement the plan.

Proceed with Safety. Supervise continuously and Constantly look for ways to improve.

Movie buff knows more than you about Hollywood, or so he claims

By Pfc. William Hatton
7th MPAD

It has come to my attention that if we can have two knuckleheads write about what is going on in the world of sports and that's all this daily has for entertainment, something is seriously wrong. Every week Hollywood puts out cruddy movies and you need to know about them!

Now you might ask, "Why am I'm qualified to tell you about movies?" or more than likely, "Who the @##\$ is this guy?"

Well, let me tell you, I've seen more movies in the past year than days Robert Downey Jr.'s spent in rehab. I know more about which actor starred in which movie than you. That's right, I said it. I know the who's who, and the what-to-know. If you don't agree with me, you're opinion just became worthless.

I'd say that qualifies me, simply for shock value.

With that said, let's jump right in it. I feel there is a great need to inform Soldiers of movies that are great and movies that are garbage before they spend their hard-earned cash at the local pirate shops or the post exchange.

"Jackass Number Two," recently released out on DVD, is the movie to buy.

The Jackass boys are at it again in this sequel to one of the greatest films ever made. That's right, the entire group is back together -- Johnny Knoxville, Chris Pontius, Bam Margera, Steve-O and the

DVD Hunt

Spc. William
Hatton



rest of the misfits.

OK, maybe the two Jackass films aren't the greatest ever made, but they are more entertaining than most of what Hollywood is offering.

I laughed so much during this film that it hurt. Not many movies have that effect on me. I will warn you, this movie isn't for the faint of heart or easily offended.

You can pretty much count on the movie being filled with stupidity, painful

situations and moments where you want to question why it's funny and why you're laughing. The pranks vary from using Steve-O as bait in shark fishing, to playing dodge ball with medicine balls in the dark, to jumping into a playground ball pit to wrestle with an anaconda.

Knoxville said of this latest offering, "Turn off your sense of moral judgment for an hour and a half."

One stunt shows Knoxville stepping out blindfolded and being hit by a bull. You have to cringe and cover your eyes, but at the same time, can't help laughing at how stupid the stunt is.

Knoxville was knocked out three times during the making of this film, which shows how crazy these guys are.

If you seriously loved the first movie, or any of the episodes from MTV, this film is right for you. It will be everything you expected.

Not only did they make a sequel, but everything throughout the film is pushed to the limit. The misfits do anything and everything to make viewers laugh uncontrollably more than in the first one.

Catch my review next week when I review Keanu Reeves latest DVD release of "A Scanner Darkly," a twisted comedy/drama about drugs, conspiracy and the future.

I give this movie five out of five golden spurs.



TELEVISION



	8:00p.m.	8:30p.m.	9:00p.m.	9:30p.m.	10:00p.m.	10:30p.m.	11:00p.m.
AFN sports	NBA: Rockets at Nuggets		Sports Center		Sports Center		NBA: Rockets at Nuggets
AFN prime ATLANTIC	NBC Nightly News	ABC World News	The Koala Bothers	Robot Boy	Sonic X	Tutenstein	Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century
AFN news	Special Report with Brit Hume	Your World Neil Cavauto			Larry King Live		Headline News